



Mayors for Peace

Secretariat

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Message from the President of Mayors for Peace

It is an honor and a pleasure to send this message on the occasion of “Zeitloslauf.”

Seventy-seven years ago, a single atomic bomb instantly reduced our city to a scorched plain, bringing cruel death to countless innocent victims and leaving those who managed to survive with profound, lifelong physical and emotional trauma due to radiation, fear of aftereffects, and economic hardship.

Rooted in their deep conviction that “No one else should ever suffer as we have,” the *hibakusha* tell their experiences, conveying not only the horror and inhumanity of nuclear weapons, but also an intense yearning for peace, born of compassion. In January last year, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons entered into effect. This is a culmination of the many long years of sustained activity by the *hibakusha* whose demands have moved the international community. It remains now for world leaders to support this treaty and shift their focus toward a truly sustainable society free from nuclear weapons.

However, more than 13,000 nuclear warheads still exist today. In its continuing aggression against Ukraine, Russia repeatedly implied the use of nuclear weapons. The world is now confronted with such new threats, and with the stagnation of nuclear disarmament negotiations, the global situation concerning nuclear weapons is becoming increasingly chaotic.

The road to abolition will not be smooth, but if each of us sustains an unshakeable conviction that nuclear weapons are incompatible with full, healthy lives for our loved ones, and share that conviction persuasively with people around the world, we will compel world leaders to turn away from nuclear deterrence. It, therefore, is truly significant that you have organized “Zeitloslauf” here in Wendisch Evern, where the signing of the Instrument of Surrender of German Command took place, in order to convey and pass down memories of the devastation caused by war, and I extend to you my deepest respect.

Mayors for Peace, composed of more than 8,100 member cities in 166 countries and regions, will promote a worldwide “culture of peace.” In a global culture where peace is a universal value, world leaders will find the courage to correct their policies. I would like to ask you to act in solidarity with us as we strive to eliminate nuclear weapons and light the way toward lasting world peace.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the great success of this event, as well as the good health and happiness of all in attendance.

May 8, 2022

MATSUI Kazumi
President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Hiroshima